

In the Claims:

Claims 1-31. (Canceled)

Claim 32. (Currently amended) A method for monitoring a patient, comprising:
coupling a vibration sensor for collecting tracheal vibration information from the
patient to ~~a portion~~ the suprasternal notch of the patient's body; and
coupling to the ~~portion of the patient's body~~ suprasternal notch a position sensor
that changes state depending upon its orientation with respect to gravity, such that the
position sensor provides information that is indicative of the orientation with respect to
gravity of the ~~portion of the patient's body to which it is coupled~~ suprasternal notch.

Claims 33-35. (Canceled)

Claim 36. (Currently amended) The method of claim 32, wherein the step of
coupling the vibration sensor ~~further~~ comprises coupling a microphone to the patient.

Claims 37-54. (Canceled)

Claim 55. (Previously presented) The method of claim 32 wherein the coupling of
the vibration sensor to the body of the patient and the coupling of the position sensor to
the body of the patient are approximately simultaneous.

Claim 56. (Currently amended) The method of claim 32 further comprising
providing a vibration transducer as part of the vibration sensor;
providing an acceleration transducer as part of the position sensor;
coupling the vibration transducer to the ~~portion of the patient's body~~ suprasternal
notch; and

coupling the acceleration transducer to the portion of the body suprasternal notch such that the step of coupling the vibration transducer and the step of coupling the acceleration transducer are simultaneous.

Claim 57. (Canceled)

Claim 58. (Previously presented) The method of claim 32 further comprising collecting tracheal vibration information over a period of time with the vibration sensor;

collecting position information over the period of time with the position sensor; converting the tracheal vibration information into digital data at a sampling rate of at least approximately 2000 hertz and with a resolution of at least 12 bits; storing the digital data in a non-volatile memory; and

wherein the period of time is at least approximately 6 hours.

Claim 59. (Previously presented) The method of claim 32 further comprising providing an indicator coupled to the position sensor, the indicator indicating a preferred orientation of the position sensor with respect to the patient's body; and orienting the position sensor with respect to the patient's body as indicated by the indicator.

Claims 60-73. (Canceled)

Claim 74. (New) The method of claim 32 further comprising:

providing a vibration transducer as part of the vibration sensor; and providing an acceleration transducer as part of the position sensor.

Claim 75. (New) The method of claim 74 further comprising providing a first housing, the first housing containing the vibration transducer and the acceleration transducer.

Claim 76. (New) The method of claim 75 further comprising providing an indicator coupled to the first housing, the indicator indicating a preferred orientation of the first housing with respect to the patient's body.

Claim 77. (New) The method of claim 76 further comprising providing on the indicator graphical representation of a portion of the patient's body.

Claim 78. (New) The method of claim 77 further comprising providing on the indicator a graphical representation of the first housing.

Claim 79. (New) The method of claim 32 wherein the step of coupling the acceleration sensor comprises coupling an accelerometer to the patient.

Claim 80. (New) The method of claim 79 wherein the accelerometer detects acceleration in three axes.

Claim 81. (New) The method of claim 75 further comprising providing an adhesive material, the adhesive material coupling the first housing to the suprasternal notch.

Claim 82. (New) The method of claim 81 further comprising providing a peel-away covering for the adhesive.

Claim 83. (New) The method of claim 32, further comprising the step of recording data representing tracheal vibration information and information indicative of the orientation of the suprasternal notch that are obtained over time.

Claim 84. (New) The method of claim 83, wherein the step of recording data further comprises recording data from both the vibration sensor and the position sensor that are obtained concurrently.

Claim 85. (New) The method of claim 83, wherein the step of recording data further comprises recording data during a period of time associated with diminished consciousness of the patient.

Claim 86. (New) The method of claim 75 further comprising providing an oxygen sensor that provides information indicative of the concentration or amount of oxygen in a portion of the patient's body.

Claim 87. (New) The method of claim 86 wherein the first housing contains the oxygen sensor.

Claim 88. (New) The method of claim 32, wherein the step of coupling a position sensor to the patient comprises coupling an accelerometer to the patient.

Claim 89. (New) The method of claim 32, wherein the step of coupling a position sensor to the patient further comprises coupling to the suprasternal notch a gravity sensing device having at least one axis of orientation with respect to gravity such that the gravity sensing device occupies different states depending upon which end of the axis is closer to the source of gravity.

Claim 90. (New) The method of claim 89, wherein the gravity sensing device is coupled to the suprasternal notch with the axis of orientation of the gravity sensing device at an angle to the suprasternal notch such that the gravity sensing device provides information indicative of which of two or more positions the suprasternal notch is in, one

of which positions is substantially supine and one of which positions is not substantially supine.

Claim 91. (New) The method of claim 89, wherein the step of coupling a position sensor to the patient further comprises coupling:

a first gravity sensing device having a first axis of orientation with respect to gravity; and

a second gravity sensing device having a second axis of orientation with respect to gravity which can be superposed at an angle to the first axis.

Claim 92. (New) The method of claim 91, wherein the step of coupling a position sensor to the patient further comprises coupling the gravity sensing devices to the suprasternal notch with a plane containing the superposition of the two axes at an angle to the suprasternal notch such that the states of the gravity sensing devices provide information indicative of which of two or more positions the suprasternal notch is in.

Claim 93. (New) The method of claim 91, wherein the step of coupling a position sensor to the patient further comprises coupling the gravity sensing devices to the suprasternal notch with the angle between the superposition of the two axes, and the angle between the plane containing the gravity sensing devices and the axial portion of the patient's body, being such that the states of the gravity sensing devices provide information indicative of which of two or more positions the suprasternal notch is in, one of which positions is substantially supine and one of which positions is not substantially supine.

Claim 94. (New) The method of claim 91, wherein the step of coupling a position sensor to the patient further comprises coupling the gravity sensing devices to the suprasternal notch with the angle between the axes of the two gravity sensing devices, and the angle between the plane containing the gravity sensing devices and long axis of the patient's body, being such that the states of the gravity sensing devices provide information indicative of which of three or more positions the suprasternal notch is in, one of which positions is substantially supine, one of which positions is substantially prone, and one of which positions is one or more of the substantially lateral decubitus positions of the patient.

Claim 95. (New) The method of claim 91, wherein the step of coupling a position sensor to the patient further comprises coupling the gravity sensing devices to the suprasternal notch with the angle between the superpositioned axes of the two gravity sensing devices, and the angle between the plane and axial portion of the patient's body, being such that the states of the gravity sensing devices provide information indicative of which of four or more positions the suprasternal notch is in, one of which positions is substantially supine, one of which positions is substantially prone, one of which positions is left lateral decubitus, and one of which positions is right lateral decubitus.

Claim 96. (New) The method of claim 91, wherein the step of coupling a position sensor to the patient further comprises coupling to the patient a housing containing the vibration sensor and the first and second gravity sensing devices.

Claim 97. (New) The method of claim 91, wherein the first gravity sensing device further comprises a tilt switch having:

a body containing a cavity;

a plurality of contact point pairs within the cavity;
an electrically conductive material that is able to move within the cavity, such that as the orientation of the body with respect to gravity changes different pairs of contact points are connected, thus providing a signal indicative of the switch's orientation with respect to gravity.

Claim 98. (New) The method of claim 91, wherein the first gravity sensing device is an accelerometer.

Claim 99. (New) The method of claim 83, wherein the step of recording data representing the tracheal vibration and orientation information further comprises the steps of:

providing a memory;
converting the tracheal vibration information and information indicative of the orientation of the suprasternal notch into digital data; and
writing the digital data into the memory.

Claim 100. (New) The method of claim 99, wherein the step of providing a memory further comprises providing a non-volatile memory, and further comprises the step of:

coupling the non-volatile memory to the patient such that the patient may be in a state of diminished consciousness without being disturbed during the period of diminished consciousness.

Claim 101. (New) The method of claim 99, wherein the step of recording data further comprises the step of:

wirelessly transmitting the tracheal vibration information from the vibration sensor and the information indicative of the orientation of the suprasternal notch from the position sensor to a recording device containing a memory before the step of converting the data into digital data.

Claim 102. (New) The method of claim 99, wherein the step of recording data further comprises the step of:

wirelessly transmitting the digital data to a recording device containing a memory between the steps of converting the information into digital data and the step of writing the digital data into the memory.

Claim 103. (New) The method of claim 89, wherein the gravity sensing device is coupled to the suprasternal notch with the axis of orientation of the gravity sensing device at an angle to the suprasternal notch such that the gravity sensing device provides information indicative of which of two or more positions an anatomical structure that defines the suprasternal notch is in, one of which positions is substantially supine and one of which positions is not substantially supine.

Claim 104. (New) The method of claim 91, wherein the step of coupling a position sensor to the patient further comprises coupling the gravity sensing devices to the suprasternal notch with a plane containing the superposition of the two axes at an angle to the suprasternal notch such that the states of the gravity sensing devices provide information indicative of which of two or more positions an anatomical structure that defines the suprasternal notch is in.

Claim 105. (New) The method of claim 91, wherein the step of coupling a position sensor to the patient further comprises coupling the gravity sensing devices to the suprasternal notch with the angle between the superposition of the two axes, and the angle between the plane containing the gravity sensing devices and the axial portion of the patient's body, being such that the states of the gravity sensing devices provide information indicative of which of two or more positions an anatomical structure that defines the suprasternal notch is in, one of which positions is substantially supine and one of which positions is not substantially supine.

Claim 106. (New) The method of claim 91, wherein the step of coupling a position sensor to the patient further comprises coupling the gravity sensing devices to the suprasternal notch with the angle between the axes of the two gravity sensing devices, and the angle between the plane containing the gravity sensing devices and long axis of the patient's body, being such that the states of the gravity sensing devices provide information indicative of which of three or more positions an anatomical structure that defines the suprasternal notch is in, one of which positions is substantially supine, one of which positions is substantially prone, and one of which positions is one or more of the substantially lateral decubitus positions of the patient.

Claim 107. (New) The method of claim 91, wherein the step of coupling a position sensor to the patient further comprises coupling the gravity sensing devices to the suprasternal notch with the angle between the superpositioned axes of the two gravity sensing devices, and the angle between the plane and axial portion of the patient's body, being such that the states of the gravity sensing devices provide information indicative of which of four or more positions an anatomical structure that defines the suprasternal

notch is in, one of which positions is substantially supine, one of which positions is substantially prone, one of which positions is left lateral decubitus, and one of which positions is right lateral decubitus.

Claim 108. (New) The method of claim 103, wherein the anatomical structure is the sternum of the patient.

Claim 109. (New) The method of claim 104, wherein the anatomical structure is the sternum of the patient.

Claim 110. (New) The method of claim 105, wherein the anatomical structure is the sternum of the patient.

Claim 111. (New) The method of claim 106, wherein the anatomical structure is the sternum of the patient.

Claim 112. (New) The method of claim 107, wherein the anatomical structure is the sternum of the patient.

Claim 113. (New) The method of claim 89, wherein the gravity sensing device is coupled to the suprasternal notch with the axis of orientation of the gravity sensing device at an angle to the suprasternal notch such that the gravity sensing device provides information indicative of which of two or more positions an axial portion of the patient's body is in, one of which positions is substantially supine and one of which positions is not substantially supine.

Claim 114. (New) The method of claim 91, wherein the step of coupling a position sensor to the patient further comprises coupling the gravity sensing devices to the suprasternal notch with a plane containing the superposition of the two axes at an

angle to the suprasternal notch such that the states of the gravity sensing devices provide information indicative of which of two or more positions an axial portion of the patient's body is in.

Claim 115. (New) The method of claim 91, wherein the step of coupling a position sensor to the patient further comprises coupling the gravity sensing devices to the suprasternal notch with the angle between the superposition of the two axes, and the angle between the plane containing the gravity sensing devices and the axial portion of the patient's body, being such that the states of the gravity sensing devices provide information indicative of which of two or more positions an axial portion of the patient's body is in, one of which positions is substantially supine and one of which positions is not substantially supine.

Claim 116. (New) The method of claim 91, wherein the step of coupling a position sensor to the patient further comprises coupling the gravity sensing devices to the suprasternal notch with the angle between the superpositioned axes of the two gravity sensing devices, and the angle between the plane containing the gravity sensing devices and long axis of the patient's body, being such that the states of the gravity sensing devices provide information indicative of which of three or more positions an axial portion of the patient's body is in, one of which positions is substantially supine, one of which positions is substantially prone, and one of which positions is one or more of the substantially lateral decubitus positions of the patient.

Claim 117. (New) The method of claim 91, wherein the step of coupling a position sensor to the patient further comprises coupling the gravity sensing devices to the suprasternal notch with the angle between the superpositioned axes of the two gravity

sensing devices, and the angle between the plane and axial portion of the patient's body, being such that the states of the gravity sensing devices provide information indicative of which of four or more positions an axial portion of the patient's body is in, one of which positions is substantially supine, one of which positions is substantially prone, one of which positions is left lateral decubitus, and one of which positions is right lateral decubitus.

Claim 118. (New) The method of claim 32 further comprising:

providing a memory;

providing a housing containing the memory;

coupling the housing to an upper limb of the patient;

converting the information from the vibration sensor into a first set of digital data;

converting the information from the acceleration sensor into a second set of digital data; and

writing the first set of digital data and the second set of digital data into the memory.

Claim 119. (New) The method of claim 32 further comprising:

providing a telephone;

coupling the telephone to an upper limb of the patient;

sending the information from the vibration sensor and the information from the acceleration sensor to the telephone.